



DIRECT ACTION

can
YOU
fill
this
space?

SEE PAGE THREE!

paper of the DAM-IWA...the voice of anarcho-syndicalism

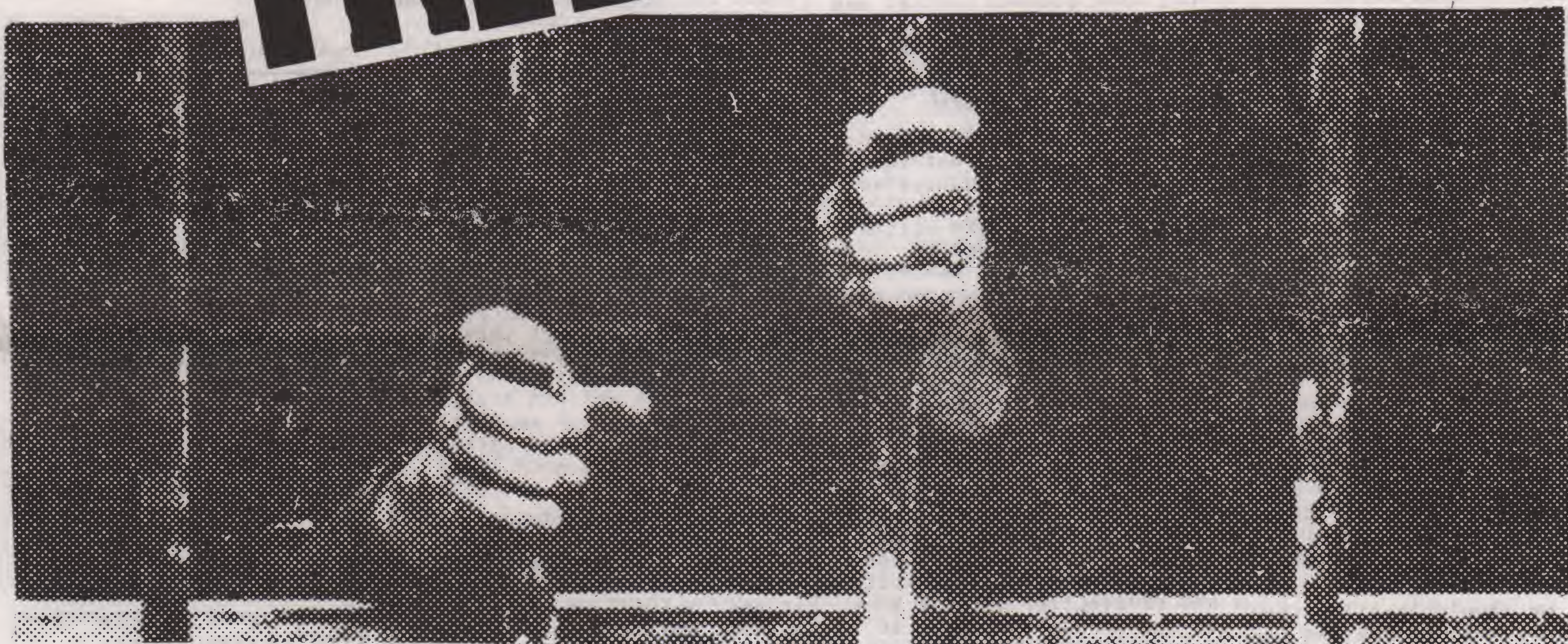
NO26

JULY 85

20p

FREE THEM!

**Amnesty
for
miners
in
prison**



The plight of the imprisoned and sacked miners is a sad comment on the weak state of the labour movement today.

Ignored by officials of their own union, anxious to 'get back to normal', and without practical support from the rest of their movement, an unknown number of trade unionists remain incarcerated.

Perhaps ten years ago there would have been a mass movement in defence of these brave men. But not in Thatcher's Britain, and not with Willis's union movement.

The newly-formed National Rank and File Miners' Movement the remaining strike support committees, and groups such as the Fitzwilliam Prisoners' Aid Committee are struggling for amnesty.

But an amnesty won't be won by demonstrations. It won't be won by waiting for a future Labour government--Kinnock has made his position quite clear.

It can only be won through DIRECT INDUSTRIAL ACTION. This always has been and still is the only realistic policy.

FREE THE CLASS WAR PRISONERS!

To get details of prisoners for adoption, write to Direct Action, with a SAE, and we will send them.

LEAKED: BIG EEC COAL JOBCUTS

Direct Action now has in its possession a document from the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology of the European Parliament discussing revelations of the drastic measures planned for the coal industry throughout Europe.. The information originally appeared in German and has been translated by the Committee's secretariat.

Below are extracts, giving some idea of the energy policies planned for the future.

*The abolition of all subsidies on European coal, leading to the loss of 100,000 jobs in the EEC.

*Coal production reduced by 15% through pit closures by 1990. Total jobs lost around 300,000.

*No subsidies for coke or coking coal.

*Probable end to German coal production.

*Drastic removal of import restrictions on coal. If demand for coal increases, imports may double by the end of the century.

*Need for a competitive, small-scale coal industry is stressed.

*Less emphasis on coal as

a source of electricity.

Here is yet further evidence, if any is needed, of the cold-blooded planning behind the government's attack on the miners. The combination of imported fuel, massive unemployment and the inevitable increased reliance on nuclear power adds up to a vast boost for them in terms of the power to control society, and a huge loss for us.

The only answer is to fight back. Not just nationally. Not even throughout Europe. We must fight back all around the world.

A RESPECT FOR LIFE

Abortion and related issues are in the news again, with the recently defeated Unborn Children (Protection) Bill, sponsored by Enoch Powell, and the Gillick ruling on contraception for the under-16s, seen by many as paving the way for an outright attack on the existing abortion law.

It goes without saying that the right of women to choose safe, legal abortions if they wish must be defended. In fact, the present state of affairs, where the availability of NHS abortions varies throughout the country and many women still have difficulty obtaining them, is in need of improvement.

Abortions, regrettably, are always going to be a necessity -- ideally only for a few women. Any return to back-street abortion would be a disaster, causing widespread misery, illness and death among working women unable to pay for safety.

Preventing abortions

The way to reduce the number of abortions is through better contraception. Existing methods are either unreliable or risky from the point of view of health. It's especially important that information and supplies should be widely available to very young women, who often end up in need of an abortion.

Yet this is the very thing Mrs Gillick and her friends are attacking. Their attempt to restrict contraception in this way shows the insincerity of their claim to "concern" and "respect for life".

Cynical

But we shouldn't allow the gravity of this attack and its possible consequences to blind us to the issues involved, or retreat into unthinking reactions.

Undoubtedly, Powell, Gillick and the rest would like to see an end to the present legality of abortion, and this is what lies behind Powell's attempt to get legal recognition for the rights of unborn children. But only a simpleton would say that this itself proves they have no rights.

Because Powell and his friends cynically make use of the idea that a living human embryo is alive and human, does not mean it's untrue.

Honest

To argue that bad circumstances (no-one wants it to happen) force the decision to destroy a living human embryo for the benefit of a living human adult is a far more honest way of discussing abortion than to assert that, like the removal of a bad tooth or grumbling appendix, it involves no loss of life.

This said, we can draw a clear distinction between abortion, as a necessary measure taken by women, attempting to

control their own lives, and the deliberate creation of embryos by scientists, in order to destroy them during research.

Angel of Death

We hear it argued that "a foetus is just a group of cells". Indeed it is: so am I, and so is each of my readers. Such a description is meaningless, an attempt to use scientific jargon to dehumanise.

Unborn children are alive. Any mother will tell you that. And it is wrong to do experiments on living humans. If it is not, then why all the fuss about Josef Mengele, Auschwitz "Angel of Death"?

He and his associates also used pseudo-scientific jargon to dehumanise their victims. They also claimed medical and anthropological research as justification for the cruelty they inflicted.

Vital research?

Today, we are told embryo research will "prevent genetic disease". But, like cancer, we already know many of the causes of these rare afflictions. This knowledge is ignored because of vested interests in adulterated foods, the nuclear cycle, lead and other pollution, etc.

We are told research will provide test-tube babies for the infertile. But why not seek the causes and prevention of infertility instead? Could it be more profitable to exploit the desperate desire some individuals feel for a child?

And what about all the things we aren't told? Those concerned about animal welfare and vivisection already know of the random curiosity of scientists, and the callousness it generates in them.

Worse than this, most of us without scientific training can only guess at the possibilities, but we know genetic engineering will soon be a reality. We know who controls expensive and specialised scientific work like this. What can we expect from the people who brought us dioxin, nukes, the Dalkon Shield, and liquid cosh?

Intelligence

We should not play into the hands of the Powell brigade by confusing the issue of abortion with that of embryo experiments. Our intelligence should tell us they are separate, though related.

As libertarians, we respect women's rights to make their own decisions concerning abortion, and must resist any attempt by the State to interfere. But this is based on a respect for human life itself. If we take that respect seriously, it must extend to an effort to prevent the manufacture of human embryos who will be slaughtered for profit.

A. ROSS.

Urgent—help wanted

Last September, during the miners strike, 13 members of the Clydeside Anarchist Group occupied the Glasgow offices of Price Waterhouse, the accountants responsible for seizing the NUM's money. This group was very active in support of the miners and raised over £11,000 for the strikers. The people who occupied have been fined a total of £2,000. Help is badly needed to pay these fines. Send donations to Clydeside Anarchists, c/o Clydeside Press, 53 Cochran St. Glasgow G1.

Bolton—Public meeting

Bolton DAM held a public meeting early in June, addressed by Denis Pennington, of Bold Colliery, near Warrington. Denis has recently been released from jail, after serving a jail sentence for bricking a scab's car and is now out of work.

Asked why direct tactics such as occupations and sabotage played only a small part in the strike, he told the meeting that pits were policed as heavily inside as out, with a 24-hour police presence in the central control room, using video cameras to establish almost total surveillance.

He also agreed that official NUM strategy was outdated. The leadership discouraged rank-and-file initiatives, but this was met with defiance. For example the strikers occupied the Area Office in the Western Area, to protest the lack of support from leaders. The Lancashire NUM President went on sick leave for the duration of the strike!

The meeting heard how residents of high-rise flats opposite Wigan police station noticed army vehicles outside it, and "police" in uniforms without the usual identity numbers leaving in coaches some time later. Unfortunately, an attempt to produce filmed evidence of this failed.

SITUATION HARSH

Things are bleak for the miners who returned in March. Pit closures accelerate, as the rubber stamp review procedure fails predictably enough to save a single pit. At Bold, the workforce has shrunk already by 300, from a previous level of 1,000. A monthly review system ties investment strictly to performance quotas, bringing heavy pressure to bear on the returning strikers. Arguments with scabs have led to instant dismissals, while strikers have been moved to jobs which don't pay the large bonuses miners depend on for a good wage. Where miners have got their jobs back it has been as re-employment, rather than reinstatement with consequent loss of pension and other rights.

AN EMERGING HOPE

Some attempts to rebuild unity have begun. At Bold, several walkouts have involved both strikers and some scabs, who returned to work in the New Year. An embryo rank-and-file movement is quietly emerging, which, together with those strike support groups that have been made permanent, represents the main hope for resistance in the future.

BOLTON DAM

Japanese take-away

Hitachi, enthusiastic advocates of single union, 'sweetheart' agreements have a unique style when getting rid of unwanted employees. At their South Wales TV factory they urged the ageing over-35's to volunteer for redundancy on the grounds that they are too slow, more liable to sickness and resistant to change.

The princely sum of £1,800 was offered as an inducement. They will be replaced by school leavers on minimum wages.

The manual union which signed the recognition agreement is powerless as they have promised not to take any action that will interfere with production.

The sushi also hit the fan at the company's Hayes site. Staff were told of instant redundancy at 10 minute intervals. Escorts with instructions entitled "Procedures for Minders" were told to remove the ex-employees within 30 minutes with "no general goodbyes".

The company said, "it is always delicate when you are making someone redundant.... people might do silly things".

Quite so! Such as giving away trade union rights, perhaps.

What is DAM?

In March 1979 a number of class-struggle anarchists (including members of the Syndicalist Workers' Federation) came together to form the Direct Action Movement (D.A.M.). D.A.M. is an anarcho-syndicalist organisation affiliated to the I.W.A. and has established a network of local groups.

WHAT IS ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM?

The goal of anarcho-syndicalism is the reorganisation of society on the basis of libertarian communism, which can only be achieved by the revolutionary action of the working class itself. Only the economic organisation of the workers, not political parties can reach this objective. Anarcho-syndicalism combines the daily struggle for the economic and social advancement of the working class within the limits of present-day society with the revolutionary goal of common action by all workers to control the means of production and distribution.

WHAT IS THE I.W.A.?

The I.W.A. (International Workers' Association), also known by its French and Spanish initials as the A.I.T., was founded in Berlin in December 1922. The I.W.A. is the international revolutionary syndicalist organisation, uniting workers worldwide. Today the I.W.A. has sections in 15 countries.

Only natural?

Racism, that set of dogmatic, cruel and derogatory attitudes that claims one "race" is somehow superior to another, is a huge con worked by the ruling class on the rest of us. There's nothing natural about it, it's an artificial attitude that we are taught, and we are taught it for a reason.

Everywhere in the world, society is divided into classes. While the rich enjoy luxury and privilege, the workers suffer deprivation, repression and degradation. Inevitably, the strains and pressures caused by this system lead to frustration and anger. What better way for the rich to safeguard their system of exploitation than to make sure we take these feelings out on each other instead of our rulers?

Divide and rule

Racists instead of attacking the real enemies prefer to blame other workers who happen to be black or speak a different language. In this way we are always disorganised to fight the real enemy and win the final overthrow of this chaotic system imposed by capitalism.

Sources of infection

Like so many other harmful attitudes, racism starts early, in the home, with ideas we may pick up from our parents and other adults who influence us.

Next comes school, where many racist attitudes are fostered, both openly and implicitly. Books and comics seem to be only about white people -- when blacks and Asians do

RACISM: knowing our enemies



appear they have stereotyped images as slaves, servants, street-sweepers, etc. Their behaviour is uncivilised, dirty, aggressive, stupid and sly.

One step on from comics, the gutter press is just as bad, with frequent hysterical outbursts portraying black immigrants, for example, as a life-threatening invasion of colossal magnitude.

People easily absorb these opinions and ideas, forgetting that they benefit only the ruling class.

Proud to be a patriot?

What about patriotism and national pride? Surely a love of country and our national

culture are positive feelings? Maybe not. Our simple enjoyment of our own land and language are easily twisted into an attitude that we're superior to anyone who isn't white and BRITISH.

But every country feels that they are best and everyone else second-rate. This is simply another form of racism, whipped up to hysterical levels when it suits our rulers economic interests to go to war.

Then we are sent off to murder people of our own class while the bosses--in each country--laugh all the way to the bank.

Good for business

Racism protects the bosses by acting as a safety valve at times of "economic crisis". It's always the colour of peoples' skin that gets the blame for unemployment, for example, or crime on the street. Blame the blacks, not the bosses, we're told. But this lie is easily exposed--just consider Northern Ireland, one of the UK's worst areas of unemployment. Not exactly overrun with Asian immigrants, is it?

Historically, racism was a justification for the slave trade and later colonialism. The pretence was that black people were fit for nothing better, or in some way benefitted from these things.

The real enemy

We must combat racism at all times. We know that NO-ONE is racially superior or more important. The real enemy are the bosses and their police.

The working class has no country. Our interests lie with our class, and the struggle between the rulers and the ruled will only be solved in solidarity, with the downtrodden of the world breaking through the boundaries of nationalism and racism.

Remember, regardless of the petty differences of skin colour and nationality, we are in the same boat. Let's organise as a class for the chance to run our own lives.

LIVERPOOL DAM

industry

Dracula in charge of blood bank

Scab Labour Councillor Edward Fisk, who worked through the miners' strike, has remained chairman (sic) of a Burnley council sub-committee.

It was widely believed that after left-wing gains at recent elections there would be strong moves to oust him, but at the Labour group's annual meeting Fisk was re-appointed with little opposition.

It now seems to be official Labour policy to sink to any depths necessary rather than rock the boat, in the struggle to win votes at the next election.

The sub-committee Fisk will preside over was responsible for weekly street collections in Burnley for the families of striking miners.

J. Simpkin,
Burnley DAM.

GOLDEN WONDER IN DISPUTE

Workers at GOLDEN WONDER CRISPS have been out on strike since May 29th, demanding a 12½% increase in basic pay. The company's offer of 6% has been rejected, as the basic wage paid by Golden Wonder's competitors is £25 per week higher. Even if the strikers' demand was met in full they would still earn less than workers at Smiths or Walker's.

The TGWU has made the strike official after a ballot covering plants at

Strike at Windsor castle

After 37 years of service, 27 of them at the Windsor Castle public house in Liverpool, Mrs Margaret Molloy was unfairly dismissed for an alleged clerical error. After seventeen weeks her fellow bar staff are still out on strike in solidarity, and are as determined as ever to win.

The pub is picketed daily between 8am and 10.30pm and has received no deliveries since the strike began. Customers' support has been overwhelming, in not crossing the picket line.

The TGWU has made the strike official and support has been received from miners, dockers, seamen, Ford workers, and many others.

The strikers ask for:

*SUPPORT on the picket line daily, at the Windsor Castle, Rice Lane, Aintree.

*INVITATIONS to speak at union etc. meetings.

*DONATIONS or regular collections. Money can be sent to: Mrs Joan Donoghue, 82 Crescent Road, Walton, Liverpool 9.

Corby, Broxburn, Widnes and Long Buckby. At the latter plant 35 people are crossing the picket line which lasts 24 hours a day, but Widnes is at a standstill, and the other two plants have only a few temporary staff in.

The strikers need your support. Raise the issue at union etc meetings. Send donations to: Mrs M. Richman (Factory Convenor),

87, St Augustin Way, Daventry, Northants, NN11 4EG.

NEW LOOK FOR DIRECT ACTION

Observant readers will have noticed that DA has had a face-lift for this issue. While not expecting to please everyone, the editorial group hope the majority of our readership will find it an improvement.

We'd like to thank our designer, Andy, for the work he put in on the new masthead, completely unpaid.

competition

There's still one thing missing though. Over the last months, many DA readers have written in about the IWA logo on our old masthead. They feel it's old-fashioned, and that the figure with the flag looks too much like a man.

We don't feel we can get rid of the IWA symbol--DA is an IWA paper--but we would like to have a logo of our own, as other IWA papers do.

So here's your chance to win fame, and a five pound book token. Simply send us your design for a logo for DIRECT ACTION.

Remember, it should be suitable to fit the space



ABOVE: THE IWA SYMBOL: TOO DATED? SEXIST? OR RACIST?

on our masthead which is now vacant (about 5 X 5cm) although drawings can be larger as we will reduce them to fit. Black and white only please.

rules

*Entries will be judged by the DA Editors, and the Secretary and International Secretary of DAM. Their decision will be final.

*Competition is open to all readers of DA, except the families of the judges. Entries to be accompanied by proof of purchase on PAGE 7.

*The closing date for entries is 15th August.

WE SHALL BE ALL!

The IWW—The bloody fight of US labour

During the decades following its birth in 1905, the IWW burnt a fiery trail across the history of American labour. It inspired a devotion amongst the workers who comprised it which was time and again to be proven by martyrdom.

The business unions

The Industrial Workers of the World was formed as a reaction to the sick state of Trade Unionism in early 20th-century America, as represented by the American Federation of Labour (AFL).

This was the archetypal business union of the type the EETPU etc. seek to emulate with their no-strike and "sweetheart" agreements. "Bosses' and workers' interests", according to Sam Gompers, AFL leader at the time, were "identical".

The AFL was a craft union for the "labour aristocracy". Workers had to pay up to a hundred dollars to join an AFL affiliate, a fee which had to be paid again if a worker changed their trade.

You can imagine how difficult this made strike action. An AFL train drivers' strike was scabbed on by the AFL Railway Waiters' Brotherhood and the Guards' Union.

Each industry had many unions, none of them geared towards unskilled workers, who weren't (and for that matter, still aren't) profitable for the AFL to organise. The coloured or foreign workers, needless to add, were prohibited.

WHAT TIME IS IT?



Founding the Labour Movement

Such a situation in the world of labour, coupled with a vicious American boss class, made it vital to build a militant workers' movement, united along industrial lines and antagonistic to the employing class.

The founding convention of the IWW in Chicago in June 1905 established the basis of such a union. The infant IWW did not claim to be building a rival labour union to the AFL --but to be building the labour movement itself. They were right: how could the scabbery of the AFL be described as a union movement, with its refusal to organise the unskilled masses of the continent?

The IWW was constituted by diverse unions and political factions. Instrumental in its founding was the Western Federation of Miners, whose President, Bill Haywood, was to become a vigorous leader of the IWW. Also present were various anarchists and socialists, and the Marxists of Daniel De Leon's Socialist Labour Party.

Bums vs intellectuals

De Leon, a Marxist intellectual, championed the idea that the IWW should be closely allied to a political party--naturally, his own SLP.

The second convention of the IWW saw off the reformists in the union, committing the IWW to a revolutionary position. The fourth established the IWW as a politically independent union. Workers, many of whom rode the rails 2,000 miles to attend, ousted the politicals, such as the SLP, by removing from the Preamble to the Constitution the clause calling for workers to come together on the political field.

The Marxists, bitterly complaining about the "bummery" --the migrant workers--who had just ensured that the IWW remained a working-class organisation, departed for Detroit where they formed a rival "IWW" committed to a moderate policy. This was a short-lived affair.

Free speech

The IWW, modest in size, but fiery in temper began to expand.

The right of the union to propagate its idea of One Big Union for all workers was vigorously attacked by the authorities throughout the USA --an attitude which led to the famous Free Speech Fight.

Time and again the commercial interests of a town, afraid of the spread of IWW revolutionary unionism would ban Wobbly soapboxers from spreading their class war creed. At San Diego, Fresno, Spokane and many other places, the union, banned from speaking sent a call to the local IWW unions for footloose Wobs--the migrant IWW members--to come and fight for the right to free speech.

Hundreds of them would pour into the town, where after being arrested for street speaking they would clog the prison system until the authorities grew tired, gave up and allowed union agitation. All this brought publicity to the union. But it was not easy, and could also bring tragedy.

The Everett tragedy

At 2.30pm on November 5th 1916, a large number of wobblies went on the steamer Verona to a meeting at Everett (Washington) as part of a free speech right in an effort to establish the union there. Gunmen hired by the Commercial Club, an employers' organisation, opened fire on the boat without provocation. They shot at men in the water and continued shooting until the steamer was out of sight.

"When that boatload of Wobblies come up to Everett, the sheriff says: Don't you come no further. Who the hell's your leader anyhow? WHO'S YER LEADER? And them wobblies yelled right back - WE AIN'T GOT NO LEADER WE'RE ALL LEADERS And they kept right on coming" (From an interview with an unknown worker, Sutcliffe, Nevada, June 1947.)

On the steamer's arrival back at port six wobblies were dead. The other 74 were all arrested for murder, as two of the gunmen had been killed by ricochets during the wild firing. Some men were held in prison for six months before these ludicrous charges were dropped. But no charges were brought against the gunmen. This episode was typical of employers' reaction to the IWW throughout its history.

International affinities

The Industrial Unionism of the IWW was a homegrown ideology, the fruit of the industrial experience of the lumberjacks, miners, agricultural and textile workers, sailors and metalworkers who made up the bulk of the membership. Nevertheless the wobblies had strong affinities with the contemporary syndicalist movement in Europe. Both the IWW and the French syndicalist union CGT, for example, regarded electoral politics as a snare for the unions. Both employed direct action as their principal tactic.

In the case of the IWW --this included the use of sabotage, which they characterised as breaking off or drawing out the teeth of Capitalism, and the self-granted reform such as that won by the IWW for forestry workers when on May 1st they burnt their blankets and demanded adequate accommodation from the lumber barons. Wobblies in the auto industry perfected the sit-down strike: small cards were passed along the production line saying, "Sit down and watch your wages go up."

The ultimate strategy of the IWW was to be the successful general strike of all industries, which would usher in the Industrial Democracy of America.

Wobblies worldwide

The IWW was not merely interested in a workers' revolution in America, but was truly internationalist. In fact, it predated the IWA as a syndicalist international.

Spread by wobblies of the Marine Transport Industrial Unions, thriving IWW unions were formed in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. The Chilean IWW had 20,000 members in 1923, achieving job control of the Valparaiso waterfront.

During the 1911 Mexican revolution wobblies fought successfully with Mexican anarchists. In the Don basin, where 100,000 miners organised the IWW way after the Russian Revolution these workers fought Lenin's red fascists. At Kronstadt IWW dockers died under Trotsky's treacherous guns.

In the German ports they were silenced by the Gestapo after the Communist Party had tipped the nazis off as to which dockers were IWW. And of course in 1936 many IWW travelled to Spain to fight the boss class in the shape of Franco and the Spanish Communist Party, many wobs did not return from Spain, either shot by Franco or the Marxist

secret police while serving in the CNT Anarcho-syndicalist militia.

Industrial victories

In America the IWW's first big triumph was that of the gigantic strike of 23,000 textile workers at Lawrence Massachusetts, who faced wage cuts. The IWW organised the strike using direct action, intimidation and boycott. The headline of a January 1912 "Industrial Worker" (one of the IWW's six weekly papers) ran

BOYCOTT LAWRENCE...RAILROAD MEN! LOSE THEIR CARS FOR THEM. TELGRAPHERS! LOSE THEIR MESSAGES FOR THEM. EXPRESSMEN! LOSE THEIR PACKAGES FOR THEM. BOYCOTT LAWRENCE. BOYCOTT IT TO THE LIMIT.

A complete victory was won. At the same time the wobblies fought bitter strikes amongst the McKees Rocks steelworkers and organised both black and white workers in the racist south.

As has been stated the IWW's main constituency was the migratory workers, "The Harvest Stiff, the Lumber beast". The union gave these itinerant wage slaves hope for a free society and the chance to win decent reforms in the here and now. The wobblies' Agricultural Workers' Organisation became its largest constituent, made up of men riding the rails in search of employment and dish-ing out the revolutionary unionist message in great uncooked chunks.

The war & after

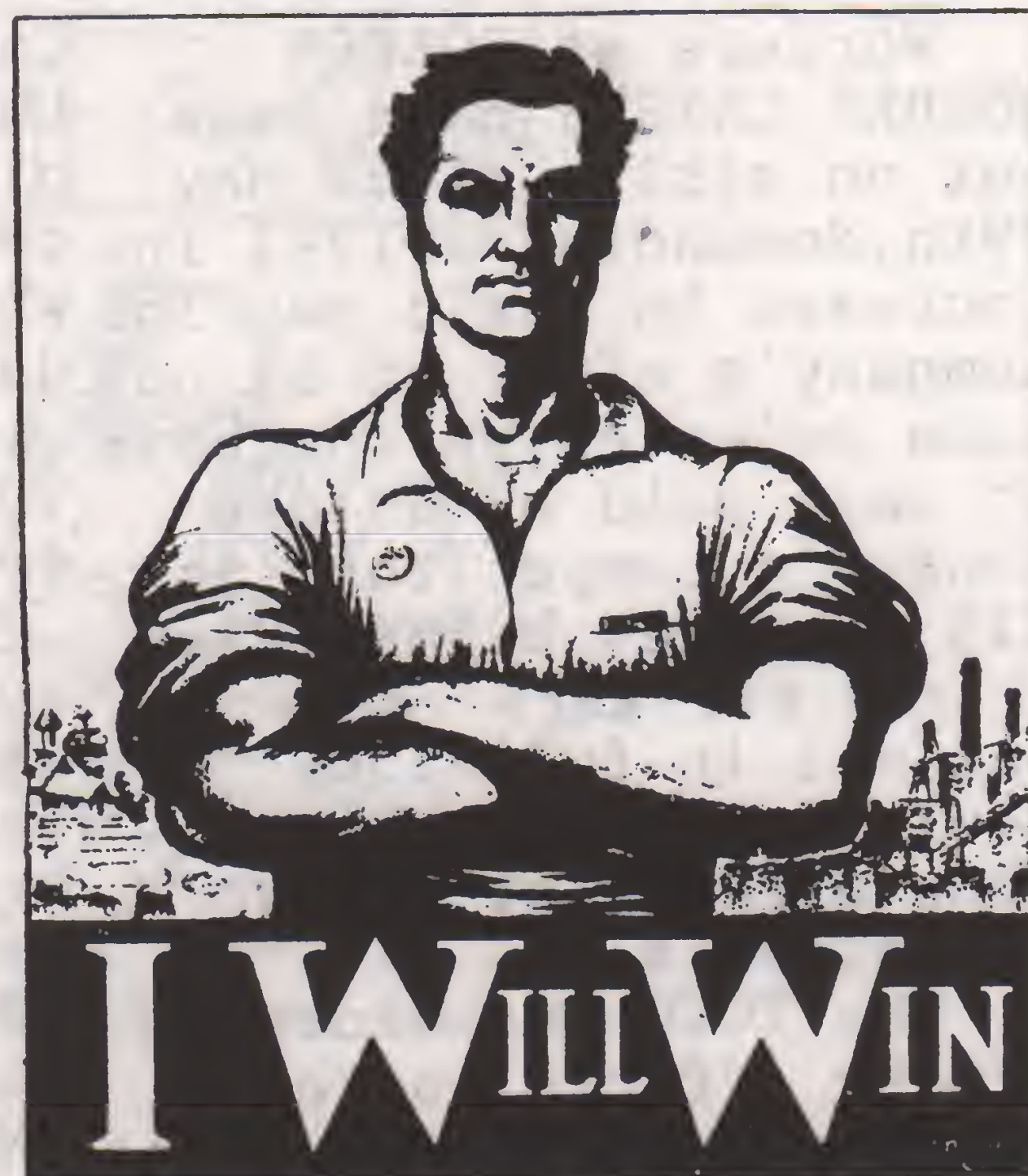
The 1st World War brought the European labour movement into the Capitalist fold, vying with each other to show their enthusiasm to kill their fellow workers abroad. Not the IWW, though. The wobblies instead increased the momentum of the class war, bringing out copper miners, lumber workers and farm workers.

The IWW met repression, beatings, tarring and feathering and the arrest of hundreds of its militants.

After the war the IWW had to contend with a new enemy, the Communist Party. These disciples of political action tried to weaken the IWW and its brand of unionism, organising rival unions to try and draw away members.

State repression led to a steady decline in IWW membership. The US government even slapped a corporate tax on the union and barred it from using the US mails.

In 1946 the IWW had 20,000 members. It continued to decline until the late 1970s when a certain reinterest in the union was evinced by a new generation of rebel workers.



THE IWW— FIGHTING AFTER THESE YEARS

STILL ALL

As the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) enters its 80th year, our efforts to unite the working class into One Big Union, abolish the wage/profit system, and establish industrial democracy continue, despite slander, usurpations and violence.

Fanning flames

Currently the IWW has somewhat more than 500 members—a number that has been slowly increasing since the mid-1970s—in the United States and Canada (and a handful of members in Guam and Europe). About a third of these work in shops where the IWW has established job control [ie union recognition]: a warehouse, a bookstore, printshops and a janitor service firm. The IWW also has organising drives under way among metal workers, apple pickers, nursery workers, maintenance workers, tour boat workers, and education workers.

Our members are also active in organising unemployed workers, strike support, fighting to establish a degree of members' control over the business unions and efforts to bring the US war machine to heel. A major part of our work, however, is devoted to the task of rekindling class consciousness—fanning the flames of discontent—and trying to convince our fellow workers that the mass suffering caused by this rotten system can be eliminated.

As a result of this activity Wobblies continue to be arrested, fired from their jobs and red-baited. Currently, Toronto IWW member Brian Burch is under a court order barring him from participating in any strike support activity, or joining any picket lines or public demonstrations in Canada. As the bosses' offensive intensifies—with wage cuts, union-busting and speed-ups now the order of the day—such harassment and repression is increasingly resorted to wherever workers resist, prompting the IWW to re-establish its General Defence Committee last year.

One big union

As a revolutionary industrial union, the IWW does not involve itself in lobbying or with political parties. Instead we focus our energies on the economic battlefield, where our

power as workers can most effectively be brought to bear. Towards this end, the IWW organises industrially (organising all workers in the same industry into the same industrial union; these unions jointly forming One Big Union of the class) wherever our numbers permit, and also organises local General Membership Branches and groups to agitate, educate and organise. The IWW is organised to ensure that power stays in the hands of the rank-and-file; by maintaining both "treasury" and control in the hands of the membership we ensure both a democratic union and the ability to survive repression. The IWW's experience has taught us that workers cannot rely on pie-cards (union "leaders"), politicians or prayers; only our organisation and direct action enable us to defend our interests and pursue our goals.

Direct action

This commitment to direct action, industrial democracy and revolutionary unionism separates us from both the business unions and from purported leftists who scheme to take control of the business unions. Curiously, many of these aspiring politicians deride the IWW as "impractical", while arguing that we should seek to reform the business unions instead of organising revolutionary unions.

The business unions—which have dominated the US labour movement since the late 1920s—now represent only some 17% of US workers, a number that is declining both as a proportion of the workforce and in absolute terms. These unions have been stagnating since the 1950s: unable to organise, relying on government to protect their modest gains, preaching harmony between capital and labour. After more than 30 years of this they have become a cesspool of corruption, gangster control, careerism and union scabbing. This is the reality that explains why when the boss comes to the unions pleading that workers' wages are too high, that we don't work hard enough, and that the foreign competition is killing him, the union bosses urge concessions on the workforce.

These pie-cards would rather cut our wages, gut our contracts of protective terms, and promote protectionism and nationalist hysteria, rather than organise and fight.

No backbone

But even if the business unions were under the control of their members, they could do no more than mount a holding action against the bosses' onslaught so long as they subscribe to the theory that bosses and workers share common interests and fight for "a fair day's wage for a fair day's work". And all holding actions must ultimately fail.

In any event, the business union bureaucrats lack the backbone for a holding action. Instead they alternate between strategies of accommodation and appeasement, hoping to satisfy the bosses' demands for give-backs, or at least to hold them off while seeking to elect a government more sympathetic to the unions (they have learned nothing from the sorry record of social democratic governments worldwide in pushing capitalist austerity).

Although unionised workers still earn on average more than their unorganised counterparts, the gap has shrunk dramatically in the last few years. And the business unions are viewed with such antipathy by workers that even when they do attempt to organise the 83% of workers outside their ranks, they meet with little success.

Committed to action

As the bosses' attacks grow worse, workers increasingly express interest in joining the IWW, the union committed to fighting the bosses and putting an end to this rotten system once and for all. The IWW is working to establish groups of rebel workers throughout industry all over North America in order to do just that. These groups can serve as a core, organising their fellow workers and demonstrating that through direct action, solidarity and organisation, we can change the world.

Nor does the IWW imagine that workers in one region or industry can successfully resist capital in isolation

from our fellow workers around the world. We are committed to building concrete international solidarity, and ultimately hope to see rebel workers throughout the world organised in One Big Union capable of meeting the global capitalist system, and defeating it. The International Conference of Revolutionary Unionists Proposed by the IWW for May 1986 is seen as one step in the process of building this unity, as are the IWW's efforts to secure closer relations with the IWA and other revolutionary and militant unions.

The tasks confronting our class are immense, particularly considering the weakened state of the revolutionary syndicalist movement today. The IWW stands committed to doing its part, as we have striven to do throughout our history.

Jon Bekken.

TRINO-ITALYS SIZEWELL B

In Piedmont, Northern Italy, a campaign is being waged against the building of a second reactor which is to be installed at Leri-Cavour, near Trino, by the regional "Junta".

Earlier this spring there was a march to Trino against the decision to build this 2000 mega-watt power station. The protest was jointly organised by Piemonte Committee for Control of Energy Choice, and the Regional Co-ordination for Peace and Disarmament, which includes many libertarian comrades from around the region, including the Anarchist Circle C. Berneri, and the Turin section of the USI (Unione Sindacale Italiana, Italian section of the IWA), who distributed the following leaflet:

"To be opposed to nuclear power stations doesn't simply mean paying heed to the problem of their technical safety or asking that the energy produced have only peaceful uses. Safe and peaceful nuclear power stations cannot exist...

Nuclear power stations are the offspring of man's domination of nature, which is, in its turn a creation of man's domination of his fellow man (sic). These power stations are the product, one of many, of the geriatric society, violent, oppressive, incapable of conceiving of any relationship except in terms of tyranny

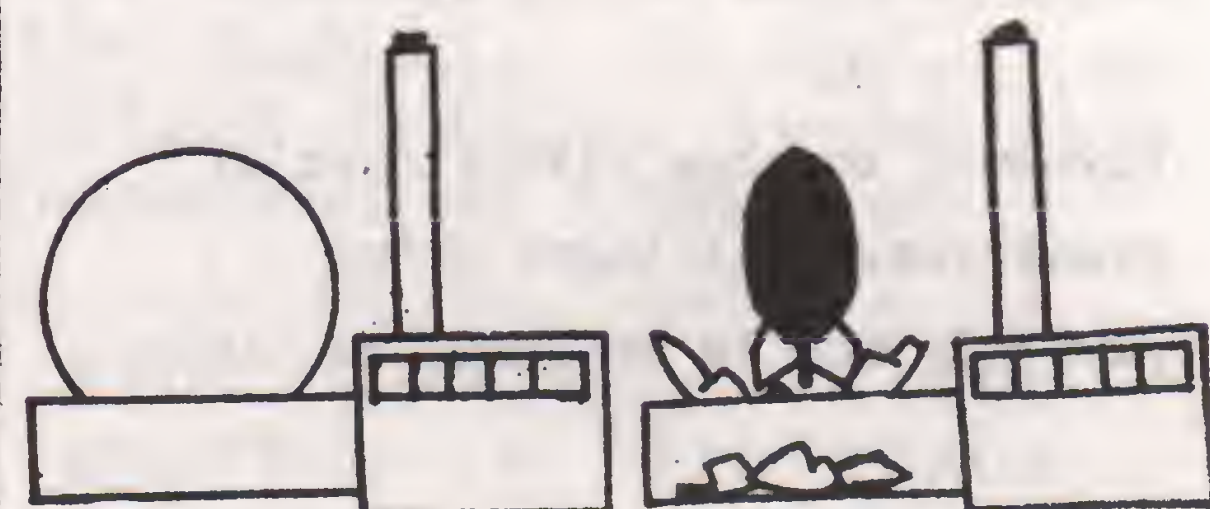


and exploitation...

To oppose yourself to nuclear power stations means postulating a positive relationship with nature, not of domination, but of harmony and co-operation. It signifies therefore, opposing yourself to the society which is the main obstacle to the creation of this new balance."

Meanwhile, new figures show that Milan is the most dirty and polluted city in the world and Italy is one of the worst polluted industrial nations. Rome is now noisier than New York. The painful murder of the Adriatic Sea continues, with the River Po used as the sewer for most of Italy's industrial north.

F. RICHARDSON,
ITALY.



Preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World

THE WORKING CLASS AND THE EMPLOYING CLASS HAVE NOTHING IN COMMON! THERE CAN BE NO PEACE SO LONG AS HUNGER AND WANT ARE FOUND AMONG MILLIONS OF WORKING PEOPLE AND THE FEW, WHO MAKE UP THE EMPLOYING CLASS, HAVE ALL THE GOOD THINGS OF LIFE.

BETWEEN THESE TWO CLASSES A STRUGGLE MUST GO ON UNTIL THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD ORGANIZE AS A CLASS, TAKE POSSESSION OF THE EARTH AND THE MACHINERY OF PRODUCTION, AND ABOLISH THE WAGE SYSTEM.

WE FIND THAT THE CENTERING OF THE MANAGEMENT OF INDUSTRIES INTO FEWER AND FEWER HANDS MAKES THE TRADE UNIONS UNABLE TO COPE WITH THE EVER GROWING POWER OF THE EMPLOYING CLASS. THE TRADE UNIONS FOSTER A STATE OF AFFAIRS WHICH ALLOWS ONE SET OF WORKERS TO BE PITTED AGAINST ANOTHER SET OF WORKERS IN THE SAME INDUSTRY, THEREBY HELPING DEFEAT ONE ANOTHER IN WAGE WARS. MOREOVER, THE TRADE UNIONS AID THE EMPLOYING CLASS TO MISLEAD THE WORKERS INTO THE BELIEF THAT THE WORKING CLASS HAVE INTERESTS IN COMMON WITH THEIR EMPLOYERS.

THESE CONDITIONS CAN BE CHANGED AND THE INTEREST OF THE WORKING CLASS UPHOLD ONLY BY AN ORGANIZATION FORMED IN SUCH A WAY THAT ALL ITS MEMBERS IN ANY ONE INDUSTRY, OR IN ALL INDUSTRIES IF NECESSARY, CEASE WORK WHENEVER A STRIKE OR LOCKOUT IS ON IN ANY DEPARTMENT THEREOF, THUS MAKING..... AN INJURY TO ONE AN INJURY TO ALL.

INSTEAD OF THE CONSERVATIVE MOTTO, "A FAIR DAY'S WAGE FOR FAIR DAY'S WORK," WE MUST INSCRIBE ON OUR BANNER THE REVOLUTIONARY WATCHWORD, "ABOLITION OF THE WAGE SYSTEM."

IT IS THE HISTORIC MISSION OF THE WORKING CLASS TO DO AWAY WITH CAPITALISM. THE ARMY OF PRODUCTION MUST BE ORGANIZED, NOT ONLY FOR THE EVERY-DAY STRUGGLE WITH CAPITALISTS, BUT ALSO TO CARRY ON PRODUCTION WHEN CAPITALISM SHALL HAVE BEEN OVERTHROWN. BY ORGANIZING INDUSTRIALLY WE ARE FORMING THE STRUCTURE OF THE NEW SOCIETY WITHIN THE SHELL OF THE OLD.

Fowler robs poor

The "Fowler Review" of the Social Security system has now been published as a Green Paper, and it makes unsavoury reading. The cosmetic notion of simplifying and streamlining the system is used to hide the fact that the new provisions are designed to reduce peoples' living standards to the bare minimum. Young people under 25 are particularly badly

replaced by a system whereby claimants will have to beg to a limited "Social Fund", for a repayable loan, when they find they can't manage on their meagre benefit. This fund will be finite and may therefore run out by the end of the year - in which case, late claimers will get nothing, whatever their needs. It will be run by social workers, psycholog-



hit; the new proposals could mean that they will lose £9.60 or more from their weekly benefit. This follows hard on the heels of new regulations prohibiting people under 26 years of age from receiving an allowance for staying in bed and breakfast accommodation for more than a short period of time (between 2 and 8 weeks, varying from place to place) - effectively saying that young people unable to find self-catering accommodation must stay with their families for ten years after leaving school, or move around the country every few weeks. An unacceptable set of options.

MEAGRE

This having been said, the Fowler cuts hammer everybody, not just the young. Everybody on benefit will have to pay 20% of their rates, and all their water rates, which they do not at present. Currently, around 60% of people (90% of pensioners) depend on some weekly addition (eg, for heating, laundry costs. Payments to cope with financial pressures. All these extra payments are to be scrapped, and

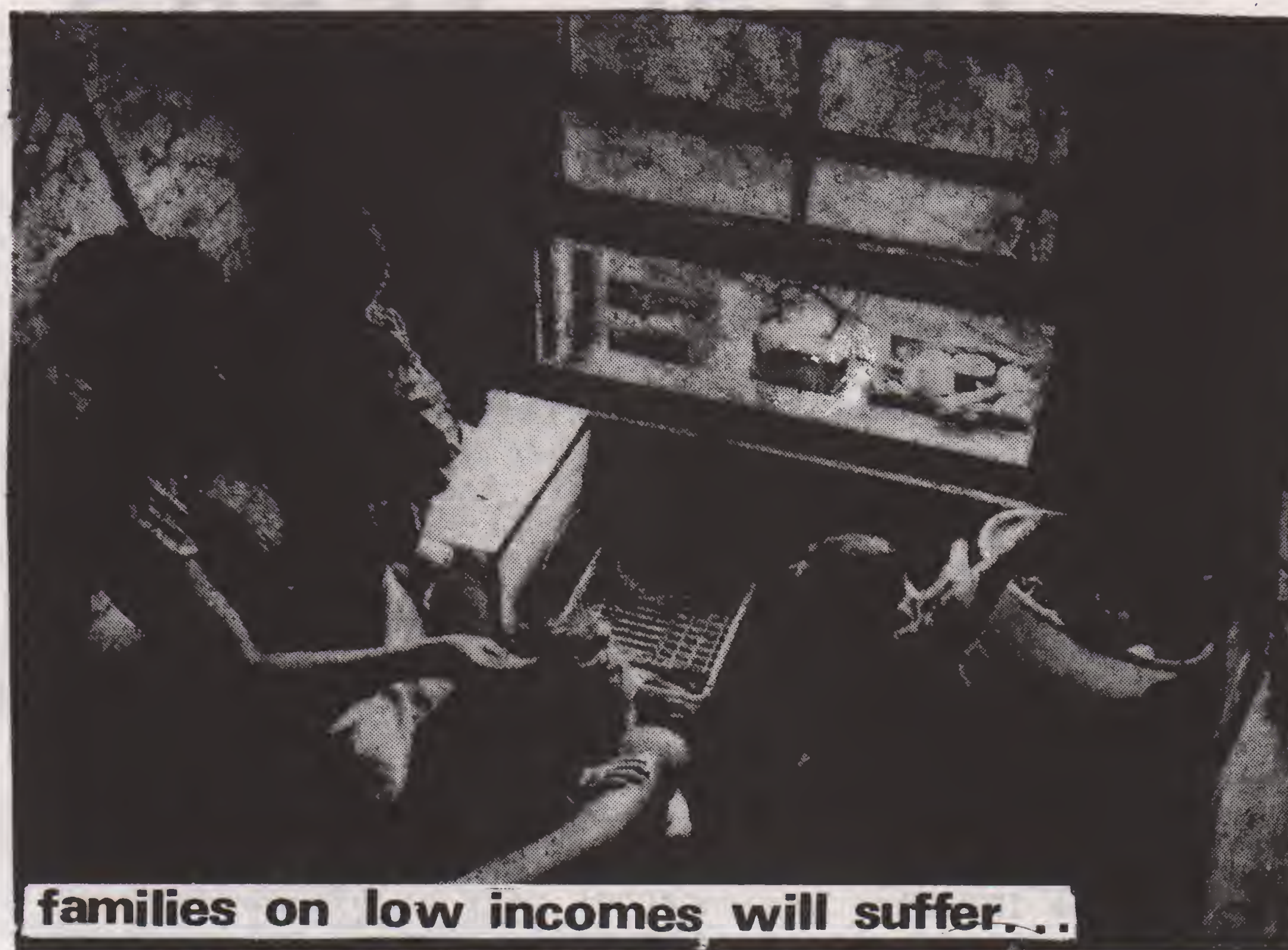
ists and "budget counsellors", thus further stigmatising claimants as "incompetent" to manage their own finances. There will be no right to an independent appeal.

MASSIVE REDUCTIONS

There are many implications to be drawn from the Fowler proposals. The obvious feature is the massive reduction of the already pathetic levels of benefit. For instance, under the new system, the universally available maternity grant of £25 will be replaced by a sum of £75, to be made available to the "most needy" from the Social Fund. Not as generous as it may at first look, as, at present, those on Supplementary Benefit with savings under £500 could get Single Payments for baby items. This could mean around £185, depending on circumstances. Just one example of what the Fowler Review will really mean for the most needy.

COMPETING FOR CRUMBS

This proposed system divides claimants by setting them in



competition with each other, for the few crumbs available from the State table. An understandable move, from the State's point of view, as claimants' unity is the only weapon they have, particularly as the Trade Union "movement" sees the unwaged as a collective nuisance who can occasionally be used to sweeten up sour-tasting pro-Labour Party rhetoric, and not as being on the same side of the fence as working people.

MORE DESPERATE

There are deeper implications. By reducing claimants' living standards to the absolute bare minimum, the government will hope to make people who are working more desperate to hang on to their jobs (and less keen to strike, push for better pay or conditions, or generally rock the boat) - and thus create a deeper division amongst those sections of society whose unity is most essential.

Furthermore, the moves are obviously intended to contribute towards the general demoralisation of those who have most to gain from a change in the structure of

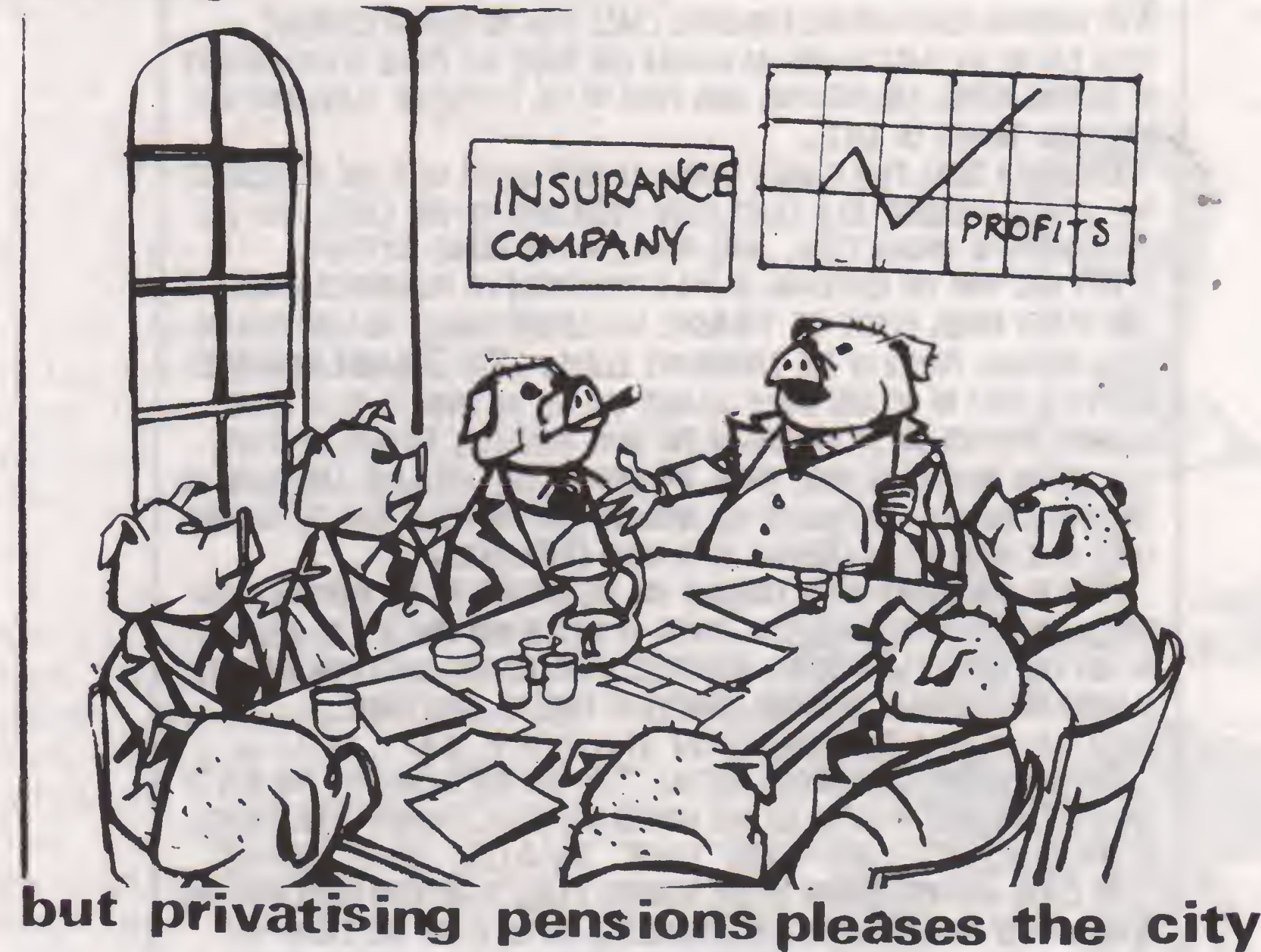
society, and to speed the process of overall destabilisation which will provide the excuse for a deeper entrenchment of the system.

WORKHOUSE

Already, there are "rehabilitation units" to which unemployed people can be sent, to be "reacclimatised to work" - in practice people who have been troublesome. With the increase in the mobile slave labour force resulting from the board and lodging, and proposed compulsory YTS, regulations, the reintroduction of a modern-day workhouse system, in whatever superficial disguise, cannot be far off. Watch for the full-scale introduction of food stamps and clothing vouchers, to replace monetary benefits.

RESISTANCE?

The Fowler Review is yet another frightening display of what the State can, and will, do. Unfortunately, it seems likely that it will meet with little resistance, (and probably with considerable approval) among the people who will themselves be next in line for having their living standards attacked.





Debate goes on...

Dear comrades,
I'd like to add my contribution to the debate started in the pages of DA by the "The Future Is Ours" article in DA 21.

Our French comrade Edouard Dubois (in DA 22) criticised the article for its "wishful thinking" about unemployment and casualisation creating a "vital underclass". He stated that "the power of the working class lies at the point of production" and that workers' "only sanction is the power to withdraw their labour". In a short letter he was perhaps generalising a lot, but he was nevertheless very nearly right. In fact he was simply re-stating the main tenets of SYNDICALISM.

In doing this he wasn't patronising or demeaning the many members of the working class who aren't at the point of production. A housewife is a worker. The millions of unemployed are workers whose labour is surplus to Capital's requirements at the moment. The unemployed youth who in today's climate may never have had a job is nonetheless a member of the working class. Pensioners, students, school kids etc can all be working class. Nobody is saying they aren't.

Syndicalism seeks to unite and weld together a working class constituted of men and women, young and old, white and black, wage earners and their families, those with jobs and the unemployed. All have a part to play in revolutionary change.

But, we have to realise what the balance of forces is in society. And it is a reality that the ultimate power of the working class lies in its role as the producer of all social wealth, at the point of production in fact. When workers organise in industry is just about the only time they choose the battlefield.

To acknowledge this reality isn't to say that the unemployed are not as worthy as those in jobs, or that industrial workers are more important than say housewives. It is merely to recognise where our power is greatest. Syndicalists believe that the power of the ruling class is based on the fact that they control the economy, and that the potential power of the working class lies in the fact that it makes all of society run. Therefore the cutting edge of the working class is formed by the industrial workers.

That isn't to say that the unemployed for instance have no part to play in revolutionary change. FAR FROM IT. The unemployed must organise themselves to better their conditions. But only the unemployed and those in work together can actually get rid of unemployment. Workers on the inside, unemployed at the gates, imposing shorter working hours without loss of pay and

forcing the employers to take on more labour.

What is wishful thinking is the idea that you often come across in some Leftist circles that either the unemployed, or the lumpenproletariat, or else "marginal" alternative life-stylers are the "vital underclass" while the rest of the working class has been bought off by capitalism with videos and a fortnight on the Costa Brava. (If tackled they usually accuse you of idealising industrial workers!)

If we are to base our politics on reality rather than the abstract the recent miners strike should be an education. Now it can't be overstated how important the support groups were that formed to sustain the strikers and their families. In the mining communities themselves the wives' support

groups involved many women in political activity for the first time. Sometimes they were regarded with suspicion at first by the NUM branches, but they held the strike together as much as the miners did. (This one episode of the class struggle probably changed more women's and men's ideas about the role of women than the predominantly middle class and marginal feminist movement did in fifteen years). Support groups in non-mining areas also sustained the strike and workers abroad contributed generously to the miners' struggle.

But the strike dragged on for a year and wasn't won because in the final analysis industrial solidarity was not displayed in any consistent manner. If it had been it's difficult to see the Government having been able to hold out very long without risking open civil war. The support groups could only sustain the strike, they couldn't win.

Frank Richardson (in DA 24) is right when he says that the support groups provided solidarity while most workers at the point of production didn't (with some notable exceptions). But that isn't an argument against the paramount importance of industrial organisation, it's an argument against reformist trade unionism and the TUC.

It isn't a matter of community organisation versus industrial organisation, as some comrades seem to think. The two are complementary and vital. But the essence of Syndicalism is that industrial organisation is our sword, while a healthy class movement is the shield.

Frank is quite right when he says that "the revolution has to be by and for all" and that "only the oppressed class as a whole can make the needed changes in society, not just one employed section". The point is that capitalism concedes more potential muscle to some sections of the class than it does to others, depending on their place in the economy. That is why some sections of the working class will be able to win wage rises this year, whilst of course the unemployed on their own will have next to nothing to bargain with, unfortunately.

Our task as syndicalists is to help bind together the working class as a cohesive fighting unity. The "crisis" and the Thatcher years have been all about dislocating and uprooting the working class in the interests of a restructured capitalism. This is resulting in the breakdown of the consensus politics that had characterised Britain, and social democracy shows its bankruptcy ever more clearly. As the "The

Future Is Ours" article made clear, we shed no tears over this side effect. But, as Edouard Dubois said, unemployment is a disaster for the working class, and along with casualisation closes spaces for libertarian change, not opens them (as the article seemed to be saying).

Our task is to combat this social disintegration, (ambiguity about this will only aid the bosses), and do our bit to ensure that the working class responds in the manner we know it can and must. Coal miners, housewives, school kids, the unemployed... all workers: if only we realised our collective power and organised it the world could be ours.

For the works,

Dino Marccone,
Teesside.

EDITORIAL NOTE: The above has been printed virtually unedited, in spite of its great length, but in future, for space reasons, we may shorten readers' letters. Where this has happened, we will say so. Please keep writing in, but keep your letters brief if possible.

Soccer violence: cont'd from p.8

getting to know the Spaniards. This is reserved for the middle class. For the rest of us, a fortnight on the Costa del Sol, English spoken, pubs like the one back home, fish and chips (no greasy foreign rubbish), and bingo on a night. Blackpool on the Mediterranean...

STALE SOLUTIONS

What then is the answer for football? Identity cards for supporters, banning alcohol at matches, more boys in blue, long prison sentences and all the other hackneyed solutions being proposed missed the point

authorities don't have an answer (although they created the problem). After Bradford and Brussels it must be obvious that they can't run football any better than they run the rest of society.

Look at the Bradford disaster. The establishment rushed to accuse hooligans of causing the fire, eager to call for the strengthening of law and order. It turns out that 55 people were burned alive, not by hooligans on the terraces, but by the hooligans in government and big business, who take millions of pounds out of the main working class sport and put back nothing. They herd people into dilapidated Victorian grounds and when something like Bradford happens they say they're "shocked". They treat people like animals, yet pretend to be surprised when people behave like animals.

Only football lovers themselves can save the game in England now.

KICKING THEIR OWN KIND

Football is the best game out. A common language for working people around the world -- working people who have more in common than divides them. In May the DAM helped two English miners to address meetings of Italian workers, including one in Turin, home of Juventus. This is the international spirit we want to see amongst workers. Instead of people kicking the living shit out of their own kind who happen to be from another town or speak another language, let's see the anger and hatred directed with a little thought... at our class enemies.

WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

Dino Marccone.



AIMS AND PRINCIPLES OF THE DIRECT ACTION MOVEMENT

(1) The Direct Action Movement is a working class organisation.

(2) Our aim is the creation of a free and classless society

(3) We are fighting to abolish the state, capitalism and wage slavery in all their forms and replace them by self-managed production for need not profit.

(4) In order to bring about the new social order, the workers must take over the means of production and distribution. We are the sworn enemies of those who would take over on behalf of the workers.

(5) We believe that the only way for the working class to achieve this is for independent organisation in the workplace and community and federation with others in the same industry and locality, independent of, and opposed to all political parties and trade union bureaucracies. All such workers organisations must be controlled by workers themselves and must unite rather than divide the workers movement. Any and all delegates of such workers organisations must be subject to immediate recall by the workers.

(6) We are opposed to all States and State institutions. The working class has no country. The class struggle is worldwide and recognises no artificial boundaries. The armies and police of all States do not exist to protect the workers of those States, they exist only as the repressive arm of the ruling class.

(7) We oppose racism, sexism, militarism and all attitudes and institutions that stand in the way of equality and the right of all people everywhere to control their own lives and the environment.

(8) The Direct Action Movement is a federation of groups and individuals who believe in the principles of anarcho-syndicalism; a system where the workers alone control industry and the community without the dictates of politicians, bureaucrats, bosses and so-called experts.

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DIRECT ACTION

FOOTBALL VIOLENCE:

Football is in the news as media coverage of soccer violence reaches new levels of hysteria. Here, Dino Marcone traces the real causes of trouble at football matches.

I had been looking forward to the European Cup Final for a long time. On May 29th I switched on the TV in anticipation of a good match, with the cup being lifted by the best team (which I hoped would be Juventus). Instead the match, when it eventually kicked off, turned out to be irrelevant, overshadowed by the deaths of 38 fans in the Heysel Stadium.

THE FACTS

The picture of what happened is confused, and despite the events having taken place before the TV cameras the media coverage has been characteristically superficial.

About an hour before the scheduled kick-off fighting broke out between Liverpool and Juventus supporters in the predominantly Liverpool end of the stadium. Sections X and Y were full of Liverpool fans, but neighbouring section Z was mixed and predominantly Juventus. Some of the Liverpool fans uprooted the flimsy fence separating them from section Z, overwhelmed the handful of police patrolling the divide, and charged into the opposing fans. In panic, Juventus fans fled to the front of the stand trying to escape onto the pitch. In the stampede 38 people (mostly Italians, some Belgians and one Briton) were crushed to death as the retaining wall onto the pitch collapsed under the weight of numbers.

Those are the facts about the Brussels tragedy, but concerning the events leading up to it, and who's to blame, there are many versions.

ATMOSPHERE

Eye-witnesses, Liverpool fans among them, have no doubt it was some Liverpool supporters who caused the deaths. Some returning Liverpool fans however, said that they were provoked.

The atmosphere earlier in the day seems to have been good with the opposing fans playing football against each other, in spite of incidents involving the stabbing of a Liverpool fan and heavy-handed police behaviour after trouble in a jewelry store.

In the aftermath of the tragedy there were some attempts in Britain to spread the blame to Juventus fans. Scenes of them rioting, and a "gunman" were screened on TV without it being made clear that these events had taken place well after the initial trouble and at the other end of the ground.

SCANDALOUS

So, where does the blame lie? Given the history of trouble involving British football fans



Who's to blame?

38 people died due to a combination of the mindless tribalism that capitalist society fosters and the criminal incompetence of the authorities.

on the Continent, the preparations for the match can only be described as scandalous. Section Z was supposed to be reserved for neutral fans. But many of the tickets were snapped up by Italian immigrant workers in Brussels, and others were sold on the day to Juventus fans who turned up without tickets. Some Liverpool fans who had tickets for sections X and Y were nonetheless bundled into section Z by the police, so that area turned into a mainly Juventus stand in the end reserved for Liverpool fans. An explosive mixture created by the authorities' eagerness to get rid of all their tickets.

TOO LATE

There had been plenty of police outside the stadium to prevent people getting in without tickets, and there was a veritable army on hand when it was too late, but there were few at the crucial time and place. The first reaction of the police at the time of the developing tragedy had been to flail out with batons at those trying to get onto the pitch!

After the deaths it was half an hour before the first ambulance turned up. Understandably, the thousands of riot police and troops who were rushed to the stadium after the deaths were greeted by missiles and simmering anger. The authorities decided to go ahead with the match to defuse the tension and allow them time to empty the stadium without further trouble.

HYSTERIA

Even before the events at the Heysel Stadium, there had

developed a hysteria about "football violence", championed and promoted by the right for its own authoritarian ends. ("There are three sources of violence in our society: Ulster, football hooliganism and picketline violence", says Maggie Thatcher.)

So it wasn't surprising to hear the BBC "experts" for the final (Jimmy Hill, Terry Venables and Graeme Souness) give us their reasoned response to the tragedy. In their opinion, the courts are too soft, youth has no respect for authority any more, national service should be brought back etc., etc.--opinions even less well-informed than what they have to say on the subject of football.

So-called "football violence"

is a social problem, with football matches merely the chosen arena at the moment. If successful, the government's proposals to combat hooliganism, such as the bright idea of identity cards for all supporters, might conceivably remove the problem from the football terraces to elsewhere. In the process, the authorities will certainly kill the game in Britain.

But this won't bother them. The new powers and legislation will come in handy for dealing with political opposition.

Someone at Chelsea FC had that other bright idea of an electrified fence around the pitch to keep the cattle in place, but this will probably be forgotten as quietly as possible in the aftermath of the Bradford fire. In a way it was lucky the disaster happened

last season, before the hang 'em and flog 'em brigade could install electric fencing in grounds around the country, otherwise we might have witnessed hundreds of deaths, rather than scores.

RULE BRITANNIA

Football hooliganism isn't a specifically British problem. In Argentina for instance the government suspended the championship last season because of repeated crowd trouble.

Nevertheless it has to be admitted that British football fans on the continent are known for getting into trouble. This is not due to some facet of the "national character" that reduces British workers abroad to drunken barbarians. I believe it stems from the particular strength of chauvinist feeling in British society.

This "Rule Britannia" mentality originates at the top and has for centuries been instilled into the lower classes. The Channel dividing us from Europe is only 22 miles across, but sometimes it seems like an ocean. British business interests belatedly took the UK into the EEC because new markets were needed now that the Empire was only a fond memory. The majority of those who opposed UK entry did so not because it is a bosses' common market which holds nothing for the workers of Europe --but because they objected to being governed from Brussels or Strasbourg rather than London ("sovereignty" they called it). Pathetic.

THE FALKLANDS SPIRIT

No doubt National Front-type fascists also had a hand in the events in Brussels, but this scum only prey on the prejudice, chauvinism and racism already deeply ingrained in society. Some of the best players in the English League are black, and at every match they are subjected to racist abuse by sections of the crowd. The football authorities have never done a thing to combat this.

Three years ago the "SUN" could greet the sinking of the antique cruiser Belgrano

by a nuclear submarine, and the death of nearly 400 "argies" with the headline "GOTCHA!" To the unthinking, "argies" and "wops" are much the same. So why the embarrassment over what happened in Brussels, Maggie? The Falklands Spirit is alive and well.

The system around the world is geared to brutalising the working class, to churn out unthinking fodder for some stinking factory, the dole queue or a tour of duty in Ulster. Add to this the fact that the UK is perhaps the most parochial and insular country in Europe, and events like Heysel Stadium really aren't as difficult to understand as commentators and politicians try to make out.

NOTHING TO TEACH US

England only deigned to play in the World Cup for the first time in 1950. Prior to that it had been thought that the foreigners had nothing to teach us about "our national game". When England were knocked out of the World Cup in 1970 all the excuses were ready, as usual; the food was no good, the dirty Mexicans kept the players awake at night, the first choice goalkeeper had been poisoned, etc., etc.

Today, alone amongst major football nations, the UK thinks top class foreign football unworthy of extensive coverage at home. So the European Football Federation's ban on English teams playing across the Channel is no answer. More contact is needed, not less.

Look at the way many British people get to see Europe at first hand. No tours of France, sampling the culture of Italy,